









leads to England. In like manner, it is for us to ask the English Government to grant a subsidy to the service on the other side unless we are willing to pay our part on this. It is difficult to see how the Australian Agents-General can appeal to Lord SALISBURY for the purpose of getting without in some sense committing the colonies to participate in the cost of the service if the Imperial Government will do so. But it ought to be evident that the Agents-General have no right to commit their colonies in a matter of this kind. And, so far as New South Wales is concerned, the question of the new Pacific Mail Service, although it had been in view for some time, had not yet made the subject of much discussion and settlement. Ministers are more responsible to Parliament than they would be in overruling the doctrine of responsibility to submit the colony to an understanding with the Imperial Government in this business before our Parliament had been expressly consulted. We are not here discussing the question of the expediency or inexpediency of establishing the proposed service, but simply wish to direct attention to the induction contained in the cablegram that somehow seems disposed to travel rather too fast with this project.

The Assembly will certainly astonish the public, even as it seems to have astonished itself, by its extraordinary vote in defence of the notorious Post Office carvings. A motion in favour of the retention of these remarkable art productions was proposed by Mr. HAWKES, and was actually carried on a division by 54 to 5. To the fuller and clearer understanding of the aesthetic principles to which the House, by this amazing vote, committed itself, it is well to quote some sentences of fine art criticism from the speech of the proposer of the motion. Mr. HAWKES characterised the interesting predicate in question as exhibiting "the beginning of art in Australia." But though this style of art was, as Mr. HAWKES quite correctly observed, "purely Australian," it seems that gentlemen's authority to be about to transform the character of the civilised world. His seriously assured the House that "this very school of art is now finding a place in Paris; for they found it was adopted by the Salons there, and was rapidly made by the sculptors in that city." The Paris "Salon," Mr. HAWKES, with splendid courage, went on to observe, "had adopted the style of carving of the Sydney Post Office, and, indeed, he had been informed that the idea was taken from the Post Office." Now this is really interesting. It casts a flood of unexpended light on the position. While the House has for years been sitting in schools and salons over the shame and discredit attaching to the possession of these works, and has been hanging its head as it walked along Pitt-street under their shadow, we have all the while been regenerating modern art without knowing it. These carvings were really the germs, the embryos we might say, of a new life in art. Already Paris is following in our wake, and Florence, Rome, Naples, and the rest, will come in their turn. The Apollos and Mercurys, the Venus and Psyches, the nymphs and graces—a shameless crew—of Grecian art will disappear, and magnificent models of policemen and postmen and the rest in their graceful modern costume will take their place. Well, we can hardly believe it, even on the authority of St. Leo's against 5. After all, it is justifiable that those members, however distant they are in their ideas on the fiscal question, federation, and the rabble, may not be inspired authorities on matters of art. The carvings which filled Sir FRANCIS Loxam with disdain, asst. Mr. HAWKES as a patriotic Australian with admiration and pride; it is, after all, just that Sir F. Loxam is the better judge of the two. It is, of course, gratifying to our patriotic to be assured that Australia has founded a new and higher school of art, but when we hear the announcement we can only assent to it with the qualification suggested by a well-known prophecy of future literary fame, and admit that perhaps the Post Office carvings may be admired when Pheidias and Praxiteles are forgotten—and not till then.

The Legislative Assembly last night, Sir Henry PARKER gave notice for this afternoon to adjourn till January next at 2 o'clock p.m. on Friday next, that being taken to be the date of Government business until half-past 6 o'clock; and that general orders of the day before the adjournment would be suspended. It is, of course, that the Government would be unable to bring in the matter this session.

Exam questions in the Legislative Assembly last night were important. It was intimated that the bill for the extension of the Royal Commission of Enquiry into the cause of conflict between the Post Office and the Prebute and Letters of Administration Committee Bill, and the Vice-Diseases Act, would be introduced on Friday next. It was also stated that the Government would be unable to bring in the matter this session.

Mr. HAWKES moved—"That is the opinion of the House, the decorations known as the Post Office carvings should remain until the authority of the Queen is obtained for their removal."

"That is to be done for the removal of the same." Then followed an illustration of the introduction of art into Australia. It was desired that the House of Commons have that they should remain.

The carvings were of a distinctive character. They were realistic. There was an "assemblage of the gods" which was copied from a relief sculpture at Assos, and from the Antinous statue of the Emperor Hadrian.

"The realistic school," was in favour at Paris.

One of the carvings was down thousands of people would inquire where they were gone.

The carvings were shown upon the member at the point which he at first took as coming from the Post Office.

"It was not one for me to say," he remarked. "I have no place of my own."

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